Vital Statistics

163 I was able to obtain reasonably reliable information on the families of 19 women. They had had 79 children, an average of about 4 per woman, and of these 46 were living and 33 dead. Most of these women were still bearing children, so that the average number of children per woman must be higher.
165 Only 3 women for whom reliable information was available could be considered as definitely past child-bearing — a significant fact in itself as showing how few women survive this period. These 3 had had 21 children, or an average of 7 apiece, which is probably somewhat above the tribal average as these women lived longer than most do. The average number of children per woman who reaches maturity may be estimated at about 5, or possibly a little more.

165 Over 40% of the children born to women now living are already dead. Practically all of them died before reaching maturity. As many of the surviving children are still young infants, it is certain that many of them will die before they are mature. Of the 21 children born to the 3 women past child-bearing, 14 are dead, 67%. From these figures it is reasonable to estimate that 50% of the children born into this tribe die before reaching maturity.

162 Of the 46 living children involved in this tabulation, 25 are males and 21 females. Definite information as to sex could be obtained for only 20 of the 33 dead children and these included 9 males and 11 females. These figures do not demonstrate any probable departure from a sex ratio of approximately 1:1 or any correlation of infant mortality with sex.

125 In all 23 females were personally recorded in detail and about 25 more
162 were observed or were recorded from information given by husbands or other
163 close relatives. These include all ages from birth to senility and it is significant that only two women were observed who were definitely mature sexually and who had not had any children. One of these, although sexually mature, was very young and not considered marriageable. The other was having her first pregnancy. It can thus be concluded that essentially 100% of the females
589 who reach maturity are fertile and do have children. There is, on the other hand, a considerable group of young men who are sexually mature and are as old as women who have children but who are not married and disclaim having any children, an inevitable result in a polygamous society and one of which the significance will be discussed later.

162 No Kamarakoto knows his own age or the ages of his children and it is
165 impossible to estimate these more closely than within 10 to 20%. There are,
[605] however, extremely few members of the tribe who can be called old. Certain-
[614] ly not more than 15% of the mature women are past child-bearing, probably not over 10%, and it can be roughly estimated that probably not more than 20 people in the tribe are over 45 years of age. We encountered and heard of none
165 whose age could reasonably be estimated at more than about 60. The tribe thus

595 dawning consciousness of Christian folk-customs, but it was evident that the
[177] majority of men had only one wife and none was surely determined to have more
[643] than six. The cacique, although in general his tendency is to lead the tribe into more Europeanized ways, has several wives.

586 A man has the right to eject an unsatisfactory wife and a wife has the right to leave a man and in both cases the marriage is automatically and completely
[581] dissolved. These statements were so fully confirmed that the situation is no doubt a known one, but the Indians always added that husbands and wives do not, in fact, separate. From our own observations and records it cannot be doubted
587 that marriages are normally permanent. Widowers and widows remarry at will and without restriction. I could not learn that a widow was expected to, or normally did, marry her husband's brother, as occurs among some primitive peoples, but there is no restriction against this if it is desired.

582 There does not appear to be any strong feeling regarding incest. It is doubtful whether marriages between relatives of the first degree, brother and sister or parent and child, occur, but marriages of first cousins (although by no means obligatory, as in some tribes) are certainly permissible and so are marriages of uncle and niece and aunt and nephew. There is thus no requirement of exogamy (even first-degree incest is not absolutely rejected on moral grounds) and there is an equal absence of obligatory endogamy, marriages with members of other tribes are uncommon, because of lack of opportunity, but do occur
582 and are not considered abnormal or reprehensible in any way. Marriages with
563 Venezuelans have twice occurred, without any evident strong feeling, but there was some tendency to deprecate them and it is curious that these two unions,
684 among all those on which we checked, were the only childless ones. From
563 rumor or gossip, not accurate information but probably with some basis, it appears that more casual cohabitation with Venezuelans (or other non-Indians) is, however, bitterly resented and that the offending outsiders have in at least one case been put to death.

589 There are very few unmarried adult females. Among the Indians definite-
848 ly recorded, only one adult female was unmarried, and she had a child, a fact
[582] not considered particularly discreditable to her or disabling to the child. That illegitimacy is so uncommon can be ascribed rather to early and almost universal marriage than to any moral reason.

582 Child-marriage was formerly common among some related tribes (although
[171] usually not consummated until puberty — another point emphasizing that the
[581] basis of marriage is not exclusively and perhaps not primarily sexual). It apparently does not now occur among Kamarakotos among whom the girls appear commonly to marry two or three years after the first onset of puberty.

589 All the older men are married, apparently without exception. Although
595 polygamy is far from universal, it is common enough to make the number of
162 marriageable girls constantly less than that of marriageable boys, so that there

589 595 162 is a definite group of sexually mature but young and (as a group) not quite full-grown men who are not married, a definite young bachelor class in the tribe.

Division of Labor

511 461 Kamarakotos have a very definite standard of living which is almost universally attained. They work hard to maintain a proper household, with a good dwelling, an adequate farm-patch, hammocks, baskets, and such other household objects as they require, personal ornaments, and the other appurtenances of their way of life. When these things are, for the moment, achieved, the [556] [185] Indians rest and play. Hoarding of wealth, provision for the future, or any accumulation of things not for current use is not attempted. Only in this sense can they be considered at all lazy, and given their own standards and their abundant energy when they have, by these standards, any reason to work, it is entirely unjust to apply the word "lazy" to them at all.

462 Nor is it true of them, whatever can be said of other Indians, that an unfair amount of labor is assigned to the women. Man's work and woman's work are, as a rule, sharply defined. Men and women do different things and often their work is done at different times, but they do roughly equivalent amounts of work. A man may be seen idly watching a woman work, but not more often than a woman idly watching a working man. It is also noteworthy that there are many operations in which men and women work together, seldom doing the same task but performing integrated parts of a common task. And while in general a man will not do a woman's work, he will do so if circumstances warrant. For instance, nothing is more typically woman's work than carrying a [854] [484] baby, but I have seen a man doing this, leaving the woman unburdened, on a long trek when his wife became tired.

The most important characters of the division of labor are:

Men	Women
The felling of trees, clearing of ground, and the actual construction of all buildings.	Most of the hauling and carrying incidental to building, but the men may help some.
Clearing and planting of conucos.	Cultivation and harvesting of crops and carrying them to the house.
All hunting and fishing except, in part, fish-poisoning.	----------

126 purposes analyses and comparisons of the various groups are adequate and more important and comprehensible than would be publication of all the raw data.

Kamarakoto measurements may be assumed to include only individuals from what I have called the central group. More remote individuals could not have been included in the correct proportions and would have made the homogeneity and representativeness of the sample uncertain. The central group samples are excellent and give good information on the population even though the samples are small. They necessarily include only individuals who visited camp and could be persuaded to be measured,[237] but any bias caused by this selection was carefully watched for and is believed not to have affected the final sample. The various subsamples (adult males, etc.) have been checked for age, geographic, and family distribution, and found to be distributed in all these respects in a way that would normally occur in completely random sampling with the entire central group available.

126 561 Measurements of children, although usually avoided by anthropologists, were also taken because they can provide interesting data on growth and no such data have hitherto been available for any comparable group. The records were, of course, carefully isolated from those of the adult groups. For the latter, three samples were separated: young adult males, fully adult males, and adult [589] females. The first is the bachelor group, which I have mentioned before as a concomitant of polygamy. They are fully mature but young men (probably around 20 years of age) who are considered to be adult and marriageable but are not yet married. At the time of recording they were believed to be fully grown, but the figures now reveal that as a group they are slightly but significantly smaller than the fully adult men. The latter are those who are certainly fully grown, married, and with children and include various ages, probably all between 20 and 50, in about the same proportions as the tribe as a whole. Among the women no young adult group can be distinguished and perhaps one or two recorded individuals had not quite reached their full stature, but if so this cannot have altered the data significantly.

128 141 In all the following tabular matter R = observed range, M = arithmetic mean, = standard deviation, V = coefficient of variation, d = deviation from the arithmetic mean, N = size of sample, P = probability of equal or greater deviation in random sampling of one population (as a fraction of 1.00), and X = an individual measurement, standard, not probable, errors are given. The word "significant" is used in all following paragraphs only in a fully technical sense and means that an objective statistical test of significance (using d/ = 3 or P = .01 as the limit unless otherwise stated) has been applied, even when the details or numerical results of such a test have not been explicitly published here.

141 The pertinent data for the three adult Kamarakoto groups are as follows:

237 [see footnote on pp. 334-335, category 116 - Analyst]